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ABSTRACT

This booklet identifies four critical areas for alcohol and drug abuse prevention strategies: communities, parents and families, schools, and the workplace. Under each area, specific ideas for action and pertinent resource materials are described. The community strategies described include youth organizations, policies and laws, counseling, the Channel One process, health promotion, and use of the media and networking. Parent support and action groups, family life skills development, and parent education programs are highlighted under family strategies. For school strategies, policies, peer programs, information programs, health curricula, and student assistance and alternative programs, are suggested. The workplace strategies which are discussed include policies, assistance programs, family programs, health promotion, and information and education programs. The booklet concludes with a list of resource organizations. (BL)

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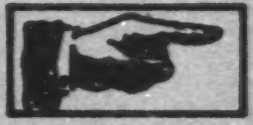
COMMUNITIES: WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE



National Institute on Drug Abuse

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CG 017798

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration

Communities are rediscovering the great power they have to solve their own problems. Drug and alcohol abuse have created devastating consequences for youth and other age groups, and for the community as a whole. It is important for all parts of the community to come together to address the many factors and causes underlying drug and alcohol abuse. It is particularly important for young people themselves to become an active part in solutions to these problems.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) have defined four critical areas for prevention strategies: communities, parents and families, schools, and the workplace. These are not the only areas nor are the strategies listed inclusive of everything that can be done. It is hoped that the ideas and materials described will help communities make important decisions and take appropriate action.

William Pollin, M.D.
Director
National Institute on Drug Abuse

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

Developing community projects on drugs and alcohol involves many segments of the community---civic, youth and voluntary organizations, as well as professional and medical associations, industry, government and the media. A community task force can consider some of the following ideas for action:

1. Youth Organizations. Establishment of youth programs that emphasize drug- and alcohol-free behavior is increasing. These organizations provide positive peer influence and drug- and alcohol-free social activities that many young people seek. Many of these groups focus on preventing drinking/drug-taking and driving fatalities.

2. Social Policies, Laws, and Regulations. Communities need to develop policies and norms that provide consistent messages about drugs and alcohol. This consistency requires considerable cooperation among parents, schools, law enforcement agencies, medical and other professional groups and the private sector and should include consideration of appropriate behavior and role modeling by adults as well as youth. Many communities are looking at the effect of changing laws and regulations with regard to drug and alcohol use among youth. Efforts to ban drug paraphernalia sales have been important to many communities. Research suggests that raising the minimum purchase age of alcoholic beverages, raising the price of alcoholic beverages, and not allowing youth to leave school grounds during the day may reduce alcohol-related traffic fatalities, health consequences, and vandalism.

3. Community-based Counseling. Community agencies may offer a range of services that includes development of positive skills for living as well as early intervention and treatment. Often these services focus on a number of closely associated problem areas such as drug and alcohol abuse, truancy, poor school performance, depression and violence. Through their knowledge of community resources, counselors may refer clients to other programs and resources.

4. Channel One. This program provides a seven-step process for assessing community needs and involving youth in constructive community service projects. An important element in the program is the role of private sector leadership. Many projects that result from the Channel One process are drug-specific (e.g., production of videotapes and drug information services), while others encourage community restoration and service projects.

5. Health promotion - Many young people have developed health values, which communities can capitalize upon for prevention of drug, alcohol and other problems. Many youth have a high regard for their bodies and can be interested in programs which promote healthy lifestyles that are incompatible with drug and alcohol use. Highlighting health promotion techniques is an increasingly popular form of community action.

6. Media. The media can contribute positively or negatively to attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge about drugs and alcohol. Local newspapers and radio and television stations can be encouraged to deglamorize drug and alcohol use as well as to provide current and accurate information. Establishing good working relationships with the media can influence editorial policies and media coverage. Public service announcements can be another effective device for communicating positive health messages. Many groups question cigarette, alcohol and prescription drug advertising that may be directed to youth and other age groups.

7. Networking. With many public and private community groups becoming involved in drug and alcohol abuse prevention, it is critical for organizations to work together in order to develop consistent and comprehensive solutions. Effective local networks can be a means for making the most of available resources.

The following materials can help you with your action plan. Numbers 1 to 7 following titles refer to the strategies listed on pages 3 and 4.

Available from the National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse Information (NCDAI): write to NCDAI, P.O. Box 416, Kensington, Maryland 20795.

Channel One: A Government/Private Sector Partnership for Drug Abuse Prevention (1,4,7)

Drug Abuse Prevention for Low-Income Communities: Manual for Program Planning (2,7)

Prevention Planning Workbooks. Vols. I and II (2,3,4,7)

Available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information (NCALI) P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, Maryland 20852:

Prevention Plus: Involving Schools, Parents, and the Community in Alcohol and Drug Education (2,3,4,5,6,7)

A Guidebook for Planning Alcohol Prevention Programs with Black Youth (2,3,4,5,7)

Is Beer a Four Letter Word? (2)

On the Sidelines: An Adult Leader Guide for Youth Alcohol Programs (2)

PARENT AND FAMILY STRATEGIES

Parents and families are often the hardest hit by drug and alcohol problems in the community. But they are also often the most dedicated activists. Here are some ways to organize and take action:

1. Parent Support Groups. These groups are formed by parents for parents. Through support groups, parents help one another as they cope with the drug and alcohol problem in their homes and neighborhoods. Parent groups often develop guidelines for acceptable behavior (e.g., establishing curfews), chaperone social events for teenagers, and help other parents supervise young people's activities to ensure that they are free of drug and alcohol use.

2. Parent Action Groups. Often growing out of parent support groups, parent action groups work with Federal, State, and local governments, schools, law enforcement agencies, and businesses to influence social policies regarding drug and alcohol use. Examples include modifying school drug and alcohol policies, trying to eliminate sales of drug paraphernalia, demanding stricter enforcement of drug laws and stronger prosecution of offenders, raising the minimum purchase age for alcohol, and getting legislation and local ordinances passed that will safeguard children's health and well-being.

3. Family Life Skills Development. These strategies enable parents and children to communicate more effectively and learn personal and interpersonal skills. They are effective for both primary prevention and early intervention with drug and alcohol problems. Family life skills programs emphasize such important aspects of family health as positive role modeling and effective problem solving.

4. Parent Drug and Alcohol Education Programs. Through these programs parents learn about the pharmacology of drugs and alcohol and the harmful impact drugs and alcohol can have on one's health. Then, armed with this knowledge, parents can become influential partners with community prevention agencies concerned about drug and alcohol abuse by offering education courses and informational briefings in school or community settings.

The following materials can help you with your action plan. Numbers 1 to 4 following titles refer to strategies listed on page 6.

Available from the National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse Information (NCDAI), write to NCDAI, P.O. Box 416, Kensington, Maryland 20795.

Parents, Peers and Pot II: Parents in Action (1,2)

Parents: What You Can Do About Drug Abuse (1,2)

For Parents Only (4)

Available from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. 20402:

Parents, Peers and Pot (1,2) (NS 017-024-00941-5)

Available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information (NCALI), P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

Prevention Plus: Involving Schools, Parents, and the Community in Alcohol and Drug Education (3,4)

On the Sidelines: An Adult Leader Guide for Youth Alcohol Programs (1)

Alcohol Health and Research World, Summer, 1982 (2)

SCHOOL STRATEGIES

Doing something about drugs and alcohol in the schools is a big job. But individuals don't have to do it alone. Working together, parents, school administrators, town or city officials, professionals, and other concerned citizens can make a difference. Here are a few ideas for action:

1. School Policies. Clear policies regarding use and possession of drugs and alcohol both on and off school property are critical to all members of the school community. Parents, school officials, students, law enforcement officials, and drug and alcohol professionals should all be involved in the development of the policies to help make them the most effective. School policies can address such issues as enforcement, referrals for treatment when appropriate, and the comprehensiveness of drug/alcohol curricula. To have the greatest impact, once they are put in place, these policies should be fairly and uniformly enforced.

2. Positive Peer Programs. These programs utilize student peers as role models, facilitators, helpers and leaders for other school-age children, particularly in grades 7-12. Programs such as these can provide help to young people who are having problems, who are undergoing normal adolescent stresses and want to confide in someone, and who want to participate in school and community service activities. School administrators must be prepared to provide extensive support and guidance in order to ensure successful implementation of peer programs.

3. Peer Resistance Programs Relating to Cigarettes, Marijuana, and Alcohol. Peer resistance or "Saying No" programs have been developed to teach young people, primarily those in grades 7-10, to resist peer pressure to use cigarettes, marijuana, and alcohol. These programs generally help students learn that the use of cigarettes, marijuana, and alcohol is not nearly as common as they perceive, that "everybody" is not doing it, and that there are clear ways to say "no" when these substances are offered or made available. Specific techniques include role modeling, videotaped practice in saying "no," assertiveness training, public commitments not to use substances, and understanding advertising methods that promote cigarette and alcohol use.

4. Drug and Alcohol Information Programs - These programs vary widely and are designed to provide accurate and current information about drugs and alcohol and the potential health, social, and economic consequences associated with their use by young people. Also included is information about the impact of advertising and realistic information about the actual extent of drug and alcohol use. These programs may be taught by a variety of people, including health educators, teachers, recovering alcoholics, former drug abusers, community health care providers, and others.

5. Comprehensive Health Education Programs and Other School Curricula. Many curricula and materials attempt to increase students' knowledge about their own health as well as to help students assess their feelings and values. Such programs often emphasize communication skills, understanding and improving decisionmaking, and enhancing self-concept. They may be specific to different drugs, but they may also be "generic" in the sense of enhancing healthy, constructive lifestyles.

6. Student Assistance Programs. These programs can serve primary prevention purposes when set up for those who may be at high risk for developing drug, alcohol, and other problems, and can serve as an intervention tool with students who have already developed problems. Often modeled after Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) in business and industry, they may use professional counselors to assist students in dealing with their problems. They also help students find needed services through referrals to local health and counseling agencies.

7. Alternatives Programs. Alternatives programs can provide specific activities and involvements that are healthy positive alternatives to drug use. To be most effective, alternatives should be planned for each individual, rather than for an entire group.

The following materials can help you with your action plan. Numbers 1 to 7 following titles refer to the strategies listed on pages 8 and 9.

Available from the National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse Information (NCDAI): write to NCDAI, P.O. Box 416, Kensington, Maryland 20795.

Adolescent Peer Pressure - Theory, Correlates and Program Implications for Drug Abuse Prevention (2,3,5)

Peer Pressure: It's O.K. to Say No (3)

Saying No: Drug Abuse Prevention Ideas for the Classroom (5)

Channel One: A Government/Private Sector Partnership for Drug Abuse Prevention (7)

Parents, Peers and Pot II: Parents in Action (1)

Available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information (NCALI), P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, Maryland 20852:

Prevention Plus: Involving Schools, Parents, and the Community in Alcohol and Drug Education (1,2,3,4,5,6,7)

Is Beer a Four Letter Word? (7)

On the Sidelines: An Adult Leader Guide for Youth Alcohol Programs (7)

Available from the Public Affairs Staff, Drug Enforcement Administration, 14th and Eye Streets N.W., Washington D.C. 20537:

School Drug Abuse Policy Guidelines (1)

WORKPLACE STRATEGIES

Drugs and alcohol abuse pose a major problem to the workplace in terms of worker health and productivity. Below are listed some things that can be done:

1. Drug and Alcohol Policies. One important aspect of drug abuse prevention in the workplace is for employers and unions to have appropriate, clear, and fair policies relating to drug and alcohol use that are consistently enforced. Once the policies are in place, decisions about appropriate prevention and treatment programs can be made.

2. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs). Many employers, both public and private, have formed programs that help troubled employees, including those with drug and alcohol problems. Employees may be referred by EAPs to other programs and community agencies where this is appropriate. Confidentiality is assured.

3. Family Programs. Drug and alcohol problems at the workplace can derive both from job-related problems and from problems outside the workplace. Where problems result from non-workplace issues, programs can be set up to work with the employee and his or her family. Many companies and unions have implemented policies such as flexible work schedules and maternity leave to help families.

4. Health Promotion. Larger companies in particular have developed programs to inform employees about general health issues and also provide opportunities (often at the workplace) to improve their fitness, nutrition, and other health-related behavior.

5. Drug Information and Education Programs. Accurate information about the negative health effects of drug and alcohol use is as important at the workplace as in the classroom. Educational programs provide positive reinforcement for non-use of drugs and alcohol in addition to offering information about such aspects of personal health as a "health risk inventory."

The following materials can help you with your action plan. Numbers 1 to 5 following titles refer to the strategies listed on page 11.

Available from the National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse Information (NCDAI): write to NCDAI, P.O. Box 416, Kensington, Maryland 20795.

Preventing Drug Abuse in the Workplace (1,2,3,4,5)

Developing An Occupational Drug Abuse Program (1,2)

RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

A number of important agencies/organizations that you may want to contact for further assistance are listed below.

For additional copies of this publication please write to:

National Clearinghouse for Drug Abuse
Information (NCDAI)
P.O. Box 416
Kensington, Maryland 20795

- For more information about strategies listed in this booklet, write to:

The National Institute on Drug Abuse
Prevention Branch, Room 11A-33
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

or

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse
and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
Prevention Branch, Room 16C-14
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

- Every State and Territory has an ACTION agency that is responsible for volunteer activities. To locate the telephone number and address for your State ACTION office, either contact your State capitol or contact:

ACTION
806 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20525

- For more information on the Federal Narcotics and Dangerous Drug Laws and the DEA public information and prevention program, write or call:

Drug Enforcement Administration
Public Affairs Office
1405 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20537
202-633-1469

- Every State and Territory has an official agency that is responsible for the prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol problems. To locate the telephone number and address for your State agency either contact your State capitol or contact:

The National Association of State
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors
444 North Capitol St. N.W., Suite 530
Washington, D.C. 20001
202-783-6868

- For more information about starting parent groups, parent group networking and drug paraphernalia issues, write or call:

National Federation of Parents
for Drug-Free Youth
1820 Franwall Avenue, Suite 16
Silver Spring, MD 20901
301-649-7100

- For more information on forming parent groups, parent group networking, referrals, and drug information packets and newsletters, write or call:

Parents' Resource Institute
for Drug Education (PRIDE)
Robert W. Woodruff Bldg.
100 Edgewood Avenue
Suite 1216
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
800-241-9746

- For pamphlets and newsletters related to drug and alcohol issues for parents, professionals, and community leaders, write or call:

Committees of Correspondence
24 Adams Street
Danvers, Massachusetts 01923
617-774-2641

- For publications and films on marijuana, cocaine and other drugs, write or call:

The American Council for Drug Education
6193 Executive Boulevard
Rockville, Maryland 20852
301-984-5700

- For information on abstracts of current drug abuse articles, how to start a Families in Action Group, and answers to specific questions about drug abuse, call or write:

Families in Action
Suite 300
3845 N. Druid Hills Rd.
Decatur, Georgia 30033
404-325-5799

This booklet was developed by the Prevention Branch, Division of Prevention and Communications, National Institute on Drug Abuse, in collaboration with the the Prevention Branch, Division of Prevention and Research Dissemination, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism; principal author: Dr. Stephen E. Gardner.

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